

COMMITTEE ON LANDS AND BUILDINGS

May 6, 2003

6:00 PM

Chairman Thibault called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Thibault, Gatsas, Pinard, DeVries, Garrity

Messrs: Ron Johnson, Dennis Mires

Chairman Thibault stated before we start I wonder if I could ask the Parks & Rec Director and his architect to come up here. Ron why don't you come up here and explain to the Committee what exactly is going on, what's happening, so that we can have a little bit more background into this.

Deputy City Clerk Johnson stated Mr. Chairman I would just for the record note that the item is the discussion regarding the Derryfield Country Club maintenance building.

Chairman Thibault addressed Item 3 of the agenda:

Discussion regarding the Derryfield Country Club maintenance building.

Ron Johnson stated I will give you a little brief background as it relates to how we got here. As you know, we have received approval to construct a new country club at Derryfield, and part of that process will be to relocate the existing cold storage maintenance building which is located to the east portion of the existing parking lot. It's a Morton type of structure. The other issue is that we also need to remove our maintenance operation from out underneath the basement of the existing country club. We have existed there since the club was built and it's very dangerous. We try to manage it as best we can as it relates to the oil and things like that, but it has become a very unsafe condition. In effect what we're trying to do is...in fact the new country club is proposed to go on the same site that the existing cold storage building exists on is to combine the maintenance and the cold storage building and move it to another location on the golf course. Now that may sound like an easy thing to do, given there's 112 acres at Derryfield Country Club, but in actuality when you're looking for a location that is on the perimeter obviously of the golf course, there aren't that many opportunities. For one thing, Derryfield is like two separate golf courses. You have one golf course that's very hilly and dry, you have the other side of the golf course, which is on a peat bog, which is very difficult to manage in the spring. So when you

look at locations that we could potentially go to, it does limit our ability to select a site. As a part of the ongoing process to relocate the maintenance facilities to another location on the golf course, we were asked by the Aldermen to come back once we had an architect on board, and looked at a couple of different locations that a potential building could go. There was never really anything cast in concrete as it relates to our department when we talked about relocating the building. We did speak and rumors have circulated around about where it could go, but we really reserved judgement until we could get a architect on board who could talk to us more intelligently about costs associated with locating a building, and also with proximity to the existing golf course. It is something that's very important to the golf course superintendent in terms of how he gets equipment out onto the golf course at different times of the day, in different seasons, and also the length of time it takes to move around on small pieces of equipment that are not like an automobile...like a lawn tractor in cases. All of those things entered into the gold course superintendent's ability to look and select a site. To sum it up, basically the Aldermen said when you have selected a few locations and then kind of focused in on one that you think is better than another, come back to a committee, this was the committee that we were instructed to come forward to, and speak to you. Again, all that being said, we did go out for requests for proposals and we did select the architectural firm of Dennis Mires and he is here with me to my left, President, and we brought him into the picture very quickly because it is the maintenance building that is kind of tying everything else together in terms of how fast we move forward with the regular building. He was nice enough to jump right into the process with us, look at three sites, try to do a quick analysis of what site could be better, more cost effective, and easier for us to operation out of. And that's where we are today really. What you have in front of you is three scenarios, three different locations that we looked at; we've had lengthy discussions with the people involved as it relates to what we think is the better location. We will be having a public meeting with abutters, if we can get some opinion from this Committee and also the full board maybe even later on tonight, on May 15, 2003 upstairs at the Derryfield Country Club at 6:00 PM and we will be notifying all of the Aldermen, the Mayor, as well as the direct abutters of that process as well. I would suspect that if we can get a blessing of this committee, maybe a blessing of the full...it would probably be subject to or contingent upon not a lot of negative comments coming forward as a result of an abutters meeting. If we were to run into a lot of opposition, I suspect we'd probably be back here. I would hate for that to happen but I guess it's possible.

Alderman DeVries stated I'd like to see what you're number one proposal is. Your favorite proposal or location.

Mr. Johnson stated I won't speak for Dennis because he's definitely prepared to go through that exercise Alderman DeVries, but if that's what you would like us to start with, that's certainly what we can do.

Chairman Thibault stated I was going to ask if the Committee would like to see whatever proposals they have so that we can at that point pick whatever we feel is appropriate.

Mr. Johnson stated I would just add that the proposed number one location is in Alderman Sysyn's ward and we have been trying to work with her as well as...

Chairman Thibault asked would you state your name for the record please.

My name is Dennis Mires. I'm the architect working with Recreation Committee. We're working on the maintenance building as well as the clubhouse itself, but our first order of business as Ron has indicated is to settle the location for the maintenance building. I hope you all can see this, but the critical feature to understand is that it's a map of the entire golf course. When we were first asked to look for appropriate sites, a couple had been identified, A and C by the Parks & Rec Commission. They'd been anticipating this project for some time and certainly were looking for alternate sites. So we wanted to be sure we looked at the entire golf course to see where if any other locations might be appropriate. These sites make sense for a couple of reasons; one this is on high ground and sort of central to the location of a lot of the acreage of the golf course. This one is near the maintenance building but the site is very wet in this area and hard to get from here to there during the early spring season. And we sort of identified this site as we look because this is a treed site, it's on high ground, it has access, and there are some institutional abutters and very few residential abutters. So these are the three sites we examined as we went through this process. Out here near Hanover Street, it's very remote and there's a lot of wet to get across this acreage. This happens to be a survey, it's hard to read from where you sit, but this is site A, which is up near the Bridge Street Ext., the parking lot across from Trinity High School and the fire station. These lines you see here represent grades or a slope. As you all know, it slopes down pretty dramatically from Mammoth Road towards the maintenance building way down here on sort of Bridge Street Ext. So the slope is one thing; and one thing we noticed is that since the new intersection is built, there's a triangle of land left over that we've been trying to track down the ownership, but have made some assumptions that the City may own this or could own it, it's either the City or the State that seems to own it as a result of the intersection work that was done at Wellington Road and Mammoth Road at the new or recent signal. So with that in mind we thought we could use that as a buffer to the residential properties that exist out here, maybe take advantage of the existing pavement that exists as part of this street which really serves nobody and minimize the impact on the golf course. This is the tree line, this curvy line, and that basically indicates the side of the fairway and if you go back to our total map, these lines you see here are center lines of fairways from the golf course architect that set these up. And really you want to have about 160 to 200 feet off centerline so you're not damaging the building or hitting people with golf balls. So it was critical to us to try and maintain lack of encroachment beyond the

existing area. We looked at a number of alternative ways to address that site. Then there's to take advantage of the existing pavement and use it for parking, setting the building as close as we can there and have our traffic circulation around it. There is a building concept in all of these schemes; we've done sort of a layout to reflect the program that the Parks folks have developed. We also looked to making it long and linear so that I could expand in the future either as office space or as cold storage. The critical feature was that all of these plans reflect the overhead doors for maintenance and equipment being on one side of the building, the roof sloping to the other so there's not snow or rain falling on the overhead doors, and we turn our back to the abutting residential area so that when the equipment comes and goes from the site, it's always buffered not only by the building but parking and landscaping to the abutting residential properties. Access to the course would be here. You can see though by placing the building this way, all these solid lines are cut lines, or grade lines, so that we're making a level spot for the building and then having to grade up to the parking lot along Mammoth Road. So that essentially all of the trees that exist in this area have to go to accommodate grading, therefore, the trees that are left are a little behind the parking lot up here and then below our new construction and continuing on down the street. There's also a cost estimate you can't read, but it's in your packet and basically for the sake of comparison, this as shown comes out to about a \$325,000 project. Alternatives are to construct retaining walls to minimize the cut, that just adds cost. It would retain a few more trees and that can be an evaluation to this particular site. Another alternative to minimize the cut was to place the building parallel with the sloping grade that comes down from Mammoth Road. In this way we're using part of the pavement to accommodate the building in order to keep from encroaching on the fairway using the backside of that remaining street for parking and using the front side for vehicle maneuver. It essentially minimizes the cut so we can retain some trees. We still have the natural tree buffer and the island that we've retained. The overhead doors, however, would be along this side and they would face the street and access again to the fairway would be this way. Essentially this portion of the street is closed for use by Parks. Same basic building. Cost comparison due to the fact that there's less site work is about \$307,000 compared to \$324,000-\$325,000. The next site we looked at was off from the current number 9 fairway. This is the nursing home, this is Trinity High School, this is the rectory that is associated with Trinity High School, and there's a loop of residential streets here. As you can see this also slopes down from the residential street, but the lines are further apart, it's a much more gradual slope. And then our 200-foot line is something like this dash line here which pretty much follows the existing tree line. As we look at that site it seems like unnatural to place the building parallel with the sloping land. It has the ability to continue to expand this way in the future without impacting significant grading or the clear access to the fairway. This particular scheme brings our traffic in this way, deliveries which are occasional dump trucks that would drop a load of sand or topsoil would happen there, they would dump, leave this way, employee parking here. Again the roof slope is like this. All the doors face the golf course and access to the fairway would be simple

through here. Because of the less severe grade, we have a lot less cut and can retain existing buffer and supplement it if necessary, but tree line is basically retained all around the building and particularly to our direct abutters. In this particular case the estimated cost is about \$316,000, so they're very close. This is another version of the same thing. It basically has to parking against the building instead of away from the building and it has the dump site over here instead of over there. It's a very similar approach with minor tweaking. What I want to point here, however, is that this particular one...what we did...for the sake of comparison this was the first scheme we did on this particular site. It has exactly the same apron as the on Site A. Now Site A, which is the one over here near Bridge Street, was rather restrictive. We have 30 feet of apron in front of the doors. We'd really like to have a little more but we were conservative due to the fact we were pushing up against the limits of the site. So that when we first looked at the B site, we maintained exactly that apron and soon discovered we can really expand the apron to make a more generous access to our overhead doors for the equipment and make easier turning for deliveries, which is what you see here. If we were making a direct comparison, this would be ten feet further back and this cost would come down to about \$308,000 which makes it a direct comparison. Site C is our third site, which is further down that Bridge Street Ext. This is the existing Parks & Rec maintenance building; this is the 17th hole. You can see all these grade lines. They dump all round here and you can see these with the various lines represent the edge of wetland, which kind of meanders all over here. These are mapped wetlands that are part of an engineering mapping that was done long before we got to the site. But areas like this; we've walked the site a couple of times and you can see piles of dumps, trash, other things that have been part of the maintenance department for years. There's a nice piece of high ground here, roughly elevation 314, but right next to it you quickly drop right down to 310. So our suspicion is this is not a natural formation and something's buried under there and who knows what. But essentially what happens is, to get down to the natural grade from the road you drop about eight or ten feet right off the road. Besides being suspicious of the soils, our strategy was to locate the building on as much high, good ground as we could. Better circulation would satisfy the movement of the vehicles with employee parking at this end. And even so we have a lot of fill coming on the apron away from the building and away from the street. In addition...so what we've done in terms of cost estimate is basically the building would be the same cost, the apron would be the same cost, and the fill would be somewhat more than any of our other sites. In addition, we still have to get equipment up without crossing that wetland which remains wet even this time of year when they're attempting to open the full golf course. So we need a path of travel that takes sort of a high ground of the rest of the course, and there's likely to be significant improvements on this high ground or equipment has to travel the street. So we didn't pursue this option in any other great detail and our recommendation is really Site B. The reason we're not pursuing Site A is the cost site to increase significant cuts, and we're making a big assumption that we can use the right-of-way. We may be able to do that but it would be quite a process to

resolve that into City ownership and time is really not on our side in this case. And/or everything has to push this way and the site becomes impractical as far as the golf course operation. So we're recommending Site B and really something that looks like what in your packet is Scheme #4. It puts the storage area far from the abutters as possible as an easy dump routine. We talk about the extent of the apron that allows for future expansion, and if you look at this we're showing a 19 foot high ridge on this side of the building. The grade over here at this first residence that runs along the entire street is 420 and our elevation for the floor of things thing is 404. So from the ground in front of this building, which has steps to the first floor, our highest point of the roof is only 3 feet above the front yard and it's separated by existing vegetation, which are really trees. It's the least expensive, it's the most practical for a long-term location in terms of the parks needs, it has direct access to the site, and we think it impacts the fewest abutters and has the best opportunity for buffering. So that's how we got there and we will welcome questions.

Chairman Thibault stated before I ask the Committee to give any questions, I'd like to ask. You spoke about the piece of land on the corner of Bridge and Mammoth Road at the beginning of your presentation. I wonder if you could enlighten me a little more about...because the City owns that piece of land. Right next to the fire station...next to Trinity.

Alderman DeVries stated he spoke about across the street.

Chairman Thibault replied okay.

Mr. Mires stated when I'm talking about Mammoth Road...this is Mammoth Road. Trinity and the fire station are on this side. This is the old...it's called Merritt Nyberg Lane, it's kind of the old Bridge Street Ext. So we're behind the parking lot on Mammoth Road. When I say the question is this little triangle that's sort of been left over after this intersection when it was reworked and there was some question about it. It doesn't appear to be privately owned, but it may be the State, the City may have rights to it.

Alderman DeVries asked do you have anything that represents the potential look of the facility? Is it going to be a metal building?

Mr. Mires replied the potential look is basically a shape like this. The reason is we're actually working with a construction manager in order to evaluate some system. There are lead-time issues associated with a steel building in this particular market, and there's also some cost issues, so we're looking at a conventional construction. It could be a lot of things, so that has not yet been determined.

Alderman DeVries stated the preferred site being, you're calling it I think Site B, it's Scheme 4 on our handout, can you tell me...it looks like we have somewhere between 20 and 40 feet for the buffer between the residential neighborhood? Maybe you could pull that up. The scaling I have on mine is one inch to 40 feet. So I'm guessing if the...it looks like you gave us scale drawings.

Mr. Mires answered from pavement to pavement is a minimum of 60 feet.

Alderman DeVries stated to the pavement, but for the actual buffering of the trees. It looks like it may be 20 feet deep. I'm just trying to determine what kind of...because we don't know what the building's going to look like, I'm trying to determine now what kind of screening I have to the homeowners that we might be impacting.

Mr. Mires replied I understand, and I think...basically what we have is over 60 feet from pavement to pavement, and we may have about 20 feet of existing tree line. It doesn't mean we can't supplement the planting and/or fencing.

Alderman DeVries asked how could that be done with the layout as you're showing it there?

Mr. Mires replied we would add planting in the area between the trees and the pavement. We may choose to do it on the higher ground. Because basically in this scheme, so any affective screening would probably be done on the tree side.

Alderman DeVries stated if I understand what you're saying from edge of pavement from the road, there seems to maybe another ten feet or so. You're saying maybe one more row of trees could go in there to add to the buffering? So there's no potential to manipulate the paved area on that lot to give more buffering in the front of that building. Has that been considered?

Mr. Mires replied what can happen is this could move this way. It's just a question of buffer here or buffer there. But we could certainly do that.

Alderman DeVries stated okay. As far as the slope on the roof of the building, I'm sure somebody's already considered snow load. I'm just looking at that one to twelve pitch. Is that going to require somebody to remove snow with that pitch?

Mr. Mires replied no.

Alderman DeVries stated and the final question I had was, when I looked at the cost analysis, I didn't see anything in there relating to security. And I didn't know if you had visited with Red Robidas to see if you had to do something to secure your heavy

equipment that's going to be in the building and that's really not for the architect but... It's part of the cost analysis.

Chairman Thibault stated if Ron can answer that.

Mr. Johnson replied yes. Red will be looking at plans for all of the facilities. There's no way we would put this building up given the amount and type of equipment for very expensive greens without asking him Alderman DeVries. Also we'll probably be placing some kind of black vinyl fence to secure this area as well in the woods. It will blend in with that as well.

Alderman DeVries asked will you be in front of the Planning Board?

Mr. Johnson replied Pam Goucher is actually on our committee, but certainly as a courtesy we would be in front of the Planning Board.

Alderman Garrity asked I assume cost is enterprise funds for the building.

Mr. Mires replied yes.

Alderman DeVries asked Mr. Chairman, can I make an additional comment? I realize you're trying to go in front of the full board tonight...

Deputy City Clerk Johnson stated the Clerk would like to clarify something in the motion first. If that's possible, I'd like to do that. I think what she's addressing may be part of what I'm going to bring forward to you. In discussing it with Parks & Recreation, they have a meeting scheduled with the abutters who have not been...the plan has not been discussed with. They're asking to report it out to the board because the board sent this to the Committee, so it needs to go back to the board. Rather than hold everything up, part of the motion would be, should Parks & Recreation and Cemetery not be able to mitigate any opposition presented by the abutters at a future meeting. It will return to the Committee on Lands and Buildings for further review. The abutters may have a minor issues with say adding some trees and Parks can take care of that, but if there's major opposition to placing the garage there and they can't mitigate that with them and come to an agreement with the abutters, then they would come back to the Lands and Buildings Committee.

Alderman Pinard made a motion to accept Scheme #4, forward this report to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, and if the Parks & Recreation and Cemetery are not able to appease any opposition from abutters, then this issue be sent back to the Committee. The motion was duly seconded by Alderman Gatsas.

Alderman DeVries stated as well as that, my concern also is that there be something more representative of the look that will be presented to those abutters so they can actually get a better feel than what you have for representations today. I guess that's a question. Will you be ready to have schematics?

Mr. Mires replied yes.

Alderman DeVries asked so they can see what they're in favor of? One additional question, if I can remember, if Parks & Rec maybe could send somebody out that could flag up the actual area that would be...maybe the four corners of the building, loosely to give us an idea of where it's actually going to sit. It would help the abutters. And maybe the edge of any cutting that would be required.

Mr. Johnson stated we could certainly do that and again, in Dennis' representation, I want to make perfectly clear that number one, this building will look nice...actually I'm looking at...I wouldn't be opposed to it coming in a more easterly direction so that if you look from Mammoth Road and you looked up nine, you might see the front of this. So it will look very nice, which would also bring it further away from any abutters, which is actually being represented here. Again, the style of the building I think Dennis can work with. We certainly want something that blends in and does look nice. It's not going to be a utility shed.

Chairman Thibault stated I guess her question is that when you meet with abutters, if you could give some defined look of the building.

Alderman DeVries stated and also maybe flag something up, not to send a surveyor out, I'm just saying so that we can have some idea of where the building will sit and the edge of any tree cutting that you might have to do. Give or take 20 feet.

Chairman Thibault called the question and it passed with a unanimous vote.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on a motion of Alderman Gatsas, duly seconded by Alderman DeVries, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee